



The Chicago Voter

League of Women Voters of Chicago
Website - www.LWVChicago.org

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LWVChicago Events

- Monday, November 7
10 AM to Noon
Social Policy Committee

- Saturday, November 12
10 AM to Noon
Health Care Briefing
Room 430

- Monday, November 14
5:00 PM
Executive Board
6:00 PM
Board Meeting

- Wednesday, November 16
5 to 7 PM
Chicago Government in Focus
Union League Club
65 W. Jackson, Chicago

- Call 312-939-5949
For more information

President's Message

This month, consider attending one of the Chicago League's meetings. In November, two meetings are scheduled that may be of interest to you. Chicago League meetings are open to all members and we encourage you to invite a friend who shares an interest in the topic or is just curious about the League.

On Saturday, November 12 at 10 a.m. there will be a briefing/all member meeting on health care and implementation in Illinois of provisions of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. PPACA (another government acronym) was signed into law in March 2010. The statute provides for phased implementation of its provisions and for state participation in this implementation. This meeting will be in Room 430 at 332 S. Michigan.

Wednesday, November 16, at 5:30 p.m. Joseph Ferguson, the City's Inspector General, will speak at the Chicago in Focus series held at the Union League Club at 65 West Jackson Blvd. Registration begins at 5:00 p.m.

Our board members and committees plan meetings on topics that we believe are both timely and of interest to members and citizens. Please support these efforts. If you plan to attend, please call the office at 312 939-5949 or email your RSVP to League@LWVChicago.org.

Margaret

Chicago Government in Focus

Joseph M. Ferguson, the Inspector General for the City of Chicago, will speak at the third "Chicago Government in Focus" program on Wednesday, November 16th from 5 pm to 6:30 pm at the Union League Club, 65 W. Jackson, Chicago. Mr. Ferguson has proposed suggestions regarding the city budget and has addressed possible corruption in city government. He promises to be a very interesting speaker.

Everyone is invited to attend this new program series which is being co-sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Chicago and the Union League Club of Chicago's Public Affairs Committee. Following a reception with a cash bar and complimentary snacks, Inspector Ferguson will begin the presentation at 5:30, allowing time for questions from the audience.

Reservations are appreciated for this free program. Contact the League at 312-939-5949 or at League@lwwchicago.org. The Union League Club of Chicago maintains a "business casual" dress code (i.e., no jeans or denim).

Social Policy Committee

At its meeting on Monday, November 7, this committee will focus on the upcoming report on proposed budget cuts from the Congressional Super-Committee.

Herb Ziegeldorf

Chicago Government in Focus – October 12, 2011



Alderman Bendan Reilly of the 42nd Ward spoke to about 40 LWVChicago members and guests at the second Chicago Government in Focus event on Wednesday, October 12.

Alderman Reilly was elected to the City Council in 2007 and currently serves on the Government Operations and Budget Committees among others. He had previously worked in the Illinois House of Representatives in the areas of air and water quality, parks and open spaces for both Democrats and Republicans. He also was the press secretary for Paul Vallas in his 2002 gubernatorial primary race.

The alderman described the makeup of his ward that includes much of the central business district and several residential neighborhoods. This ward's population has increased by about 35% since the

2000 census. He feels that he serves as an ombudsman for his constituents and works with city departments and the Mayor to solve problems.

Mayor Emanuel had introduced his City Budget earlier in the day. Reilly commented that the budget has a \$640 million "hole." He said "the previous four years were a litany of irresponsibility in budgeting. This is an honest budget with no smoke and mirrors."

Reilly feels that the budget must restore fiscal discipline; some problems may have been in place for over 60 years. One fact he mentioned is that the city has a ratio of 8 employees for one manager but at many private firms this ratio is 15 employees for each manager. He favors garbage collection using the grid system, using automated information technology in billing procedures, cross training inspectors, an employee wellness program, the decrease in the head tax for employers, and a merged police and fire managerial structure at the headquarters level.

In the area of proposed revenue enhancements he does not support the suggested increase in hotel tax because he thinks it will discourage tourism and conventions.

The alderman's goals include repairing infrastructure, reforming valet parking fees, enforcing insurance requirements for valet parking and increasing fines for construction noise and illegal billboards.

Reilly discussed privatization. He feels that selling Midway Airport would be a mistake and that water is the city's most precious asset.

Norma Braude



Illinois Health Care Exchanges

The Illinois Health Insurance Exchange Commission held a meeting on October 6th to present and discuss the Illinois Health Benefits Exchange Report.

The document that was presented was largely a variety of proposals as to how the Health Exchanges might be structured and operated. Those groups who have followed the Health Care Exchange issue in the legislature were disappointed that no specific structure or policy recommendations were made. The materials just seemed a repeat of many possible scenarios that have been presented over the past year. To access this document you can enter: Illinois Health Benefits Exchange Legislative Committee, and scroll down to the October 6, 2011 meeting. Open this and then open the Draft Committee Report.

The document is only a draft and the committee plans on releasing a final version later this month. There was discussion regarding if this should be presented to the Fall Legislative Veto Session. Some on the committee feel that since June 23rd is deadline for state to apply for federal money that date should be the deadline.

One hot topic is the proposal to have legislators on the Exchange Board. This is something that nearly all those organizations following this legislation – consumers, insurers and businesses agree on; they do not want legislators on the board.

How to finance the Exchange is another important issue. Some of the options being considered are: charging consumers a fee to access the exchange, assessing health care plans offered on the Exchange, assessing all Illinois health insurance companies, and the use of state general revenue to name a few.

This issue is moving forward and the LWV is following it closely. LWVChicago will be holding a Health Care briefing with presenter Jillian Phillips from the Campaign for Better Health Care on **Saturday November 12th** from 10 AM to noon in Room 430 to bring you the latest developments about the Exchanges. Please RSVP to League@LWVChicago.org or 312-939-5949 to be placed on the building's security list.

Margaret O'Hara

Lake Michigan LWV Annual Meeting

The 2011 Annual Meeting of the Lake Michigan League of Women Voters convened at the Oak Lawn Hilton on October 21 and 22. Pat Graunke attended

as a delegate of LWV Illinois and Margaret Herring represented LWV Chicago. The meeting began with a Toxics to Treasures Tour of the Hegewisch area (southeast Chicago/10th ward) and ended with a tour of Beaubien Woods, the southernmost area of the Cook County Forest Preserve.

The Lake Michigan League of Women Voters is an Inter-League organization; its members consist of the state Leagues of the four states around Lake Michigan and the local Leagues whose municipal or county boundaries touch the shores of Lake Michigan. The program of the LMLWV is based on the Natural Resources positions of LWVUS as they relate to the environmental issues affecting the Lake Michigan Basin and surrounding states.

Three speakers described activities that affect Lake Michigan. Yes, all three mentioned the Asian carp. Todd Main, Deputy Director of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, described Project Millennium. Its goal is to connect the south Chicago lakefront to Millennium Park and place under one organization public lands now with the Cook County Forest Preserve, Chicago Park District and the Chicago International Port Authority. Together they exercise control 2,500 acres of open public space in southeast Chicago. Project Millennium envisions protection of the biodiversity and redevelopment of industry in the southeast area. The transportation hub of trains, highways and the port will drive the industrial development and the reuse of existing industrial areas. The Toxics to Treasure Tour showed the natural areas that support birds and fish and highlighted the empty industrial areas and the environmental problems of some existing and proposed industry.

Commissioner Debra Shore of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District presented a history of the development of the waste water treatment system from the construction of the Water Tower and Pumping Station at Michigan and Chicago Avenues to construction of the Deep Tunnel and the reservoirs that will hold storm water for treatment before discharge.

Judy Beck, Lake Michigan Manager of the U.S. EPA Great Lakes National Program Office spoke about the programs that the federal government supports in the efforts to restore water quality and biodiversity in Lake Michigan and the lake basin.

Information about the Lake Michigan LWV is available at: LakeMichiganLWV.wordpress.com

Margaret Herring and Pat Graunke

Chicago Ward Redistricting

Alderman Mell, Chair of the Redistricting Committee, had introduced a resolution to the Chicago City Council that indicated his committee would hold a number of public hearings before and after the new ward map is introduced. As of October 25 there is only one hearing that is scheduled for November 1 after the Council Finance Committee meeting.

Contact your alderman and urge her/him to support a transparent redistricting process with public participation. If a hearing is held in your area plan to attend. To learn of other planned meetings consult the LWVChicago web site under the redistricting tab.

Deputy Registrar Training

The next training sessions for Deputy Voter Registrars are:

Wednesday, November 2, 11 AM

Thursday, November 10, 6 PM

Saturday, November 19, 9:30 AM

LWVChicago's Voter Service chair, Terry Williams, must register you for the training at least 3 days in advance. Please call the office if you would like to be included in the class.

Report from the Chicago City Council

October 5, 2011 Meeting

Rollback of Head Tax

Currently, businesses with more than 50 employees are charged \$4 dollars per employee in a "Head Tax." Approximately 2,700 Chicago companies registered and remitted the "Head Tax" contributing approximately \$35 million in revenue in 2009 and 2010. With the legislation introduced this past week, the "Head Tax" will be reduced by 50 percent in 2012 with its complete elimination occurring in 2014. According to Mayor Emanuel, this legislation will allow Ford Motor Company to add a third shift.

Prohibition of Gel Fuel Sales

The sale of gel fuel will be prohibited in the city. Gel fuel is used in patio lighting and heating devices and has caused many serious injuries and several deaths. Pourable gel fuel can ignite unexpectedly and splatter onto people and objects nearby when it is poured into a firepot that is still burning. This hazard can occur if the consumer does not see the flame or is not aware that the firepot is still ignited.

Pat Graunke and Bev Meyer

Ozzie Badal

Ozzie Badal, a longtime member of LWVChicago, passed away in October. She was committed to good government and LWV goals. She was an urban planner by profession and directed Code Enforcement during urban renewal in Hyde Park. Ozzie later served as assistant commissioner of the Department of Planning for Chicago and then as deputy director of the City Health Systems Agency. She was active in LWVChicago's Unit 66/74 and Citizens Information Service. She contributed a great deal to Chicago and League and will be greatly missed.

Dorothy Scheff

**Donation to the Tribute Fund
in Memory of Winnie Slusser
Betty Willhoite**

Unit Meetings

Unit 1/5 Downtown – evening
Monday, November 21 – 5:30 pm
LWV Office

Leader – Margaret Herring

Unit 9/11 West Side – daytime
Sunday, November 20 – 2 PM

Third Unitarian Church
301 N. Mayfield, Chicago
Leader – Joan Morton

Unit 21/35 North Side – Evening
Tuesday, November 22 – 7:30 PM

Home of Hollis Burgess
Leader – Carol Ziegeldorf

Unit 22 Downtown – daytime
Thursday, November 17 – 10 AM

LWV Office
Leader – Bernice Fortini

Unit 41/42 – South Side
Call the LWVChicago Office
Coordinator – Marcia Cowing

Unit 66/74 – Montgomery Place – Daytime
Thursday, November 17 – 1:30 PM

Montgomery Place, East Room
Leader – Dorothy Scheff

LWVUS

The League of Women Voters of the United States has been lobbying in opposition to the proposed Keystone XL Pipeline project because we support strong regulation to protect our natural environment. This proposed expansion project is for a 1,661-mile, 36-inch crude oil pipeline that would begin at Hardisty, Alberta and extend southeast through Saskatchewan, Montana, South Dakota and Nebraska. It would incorporate a portion of the Keystone Pipeline through Nebraska and Kansas to serve markets at Cushing, Oklahoma before continuing through Oklahoma to a delivery point near existing terminals in Nederland, Texas to serve the Port Arthur, Texas marketplace. The pipeline would carry tar sands oil, which is heavier, more carbon-intensive, and more corrosive than conventional oil. The pipeline is scheduled for completion in 2013, though it would not be at capacity until 2056.

Specific points made by LWVUS in its opposition efforts are that:

1) Granting a permit for the pipeline would be inconsistent with meaningful action on climate change. 2) The route of the proposed pipeline over the Ogallala Aquifer poses an unacceptable risk to this critically important water source. 3) Reducing demand is the best way to improve America's energy security.

LWVUS and many local and state Leagues are working to eliminate barriers to voting; especially those related to legislation requiring government issued picture IDs.

The first background paper for the LWVUS Privatization Study is now available on the web site. The purpose of this study is to identify those parameters and policy issues to be considered in connection with proposals to transfer federal, state or local government services, assets and/or functions to the private sector. It will review the stated goals and the community impact of such transfers, and identify strategies to ensure transparency, accountability, and preservation of the common good. We are asked to study and reach consensus on this topic by May 2012.

Follow the activities on LWV.org and Facebook.

Lake Michigan LWV

The report on the Annual Meeting of LMLWV is on page 3 of this **Voter**.

LWVIL

The Sustainable Food and Water Subcommittee of LWVIL is organizing a tour on **Thursday, November 10**, 9:30 AM at the Chicago High School for Agricultural Sciences (3857 W. 111th St in Chicago). RSVP by **November 3** to LWVFood@gmail.com.

CHAS is a unique high school emphasizing a wide range of agricultural sciences. This last working farm in Chicago focuses on both crop and livestock production and management including large animals, a closed loop aquaponic system raising tilapia and basil, greenhouses, an orchard, and a golf course among other features. See www.chicagoagr.org for more information about the school and its curriculum. The student-led tour runs approximately 45 minutes to an hour.

Consult LWVIL.org for other activities of LWVIL and its committees.

LWV Cook County

Members of LWVCC have been interviewing the Cook County commissioners to discuss redistricting, procedures at Board meetings and the budget process. A county redistricting committee will be appointed by the Board President and plans to complete its work in 2012 after the Chicago City Council redistricts the wards. Cook County's fiscal year begins December 1 and the budget should be in place at that time. You can read about the interviews and Board meetings on the LWVCC web site: cookcounty.il.lwvnet.org.

The Future of Chicago Lecture Series Fred Hess Memorial Lecture

November 30, 2011 12:00 PM - 12:45 PM

Jean-Claude Brizard – CEO of Chicago Public Schools Speaks on The Future of Education in Chicago at Lecture Center F at University of Illinois at Chicago.

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A monthly series of informal public meetings where areas of Chicago government are discussed by city officials.

Co-sponsored by the
LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CHICAGO
and the
UNION LEAGUE CLUB OF CHICAGO

Chicago Government in Focus



Welcomes
Joseph Ferguson
Inspector General
City of Chicago

Wednesday, November 16, 2011

5 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Program begins at 5:30

at the

Union League Club

65 W. Jackson Blvd., Chicago, IL

Admission is free, cash bar

RSVPs appreciated - 312-939-5949 or League@LWVChicago.org

Dress: Business casual, no jeans/denim